

## **Historic, Archive Document**

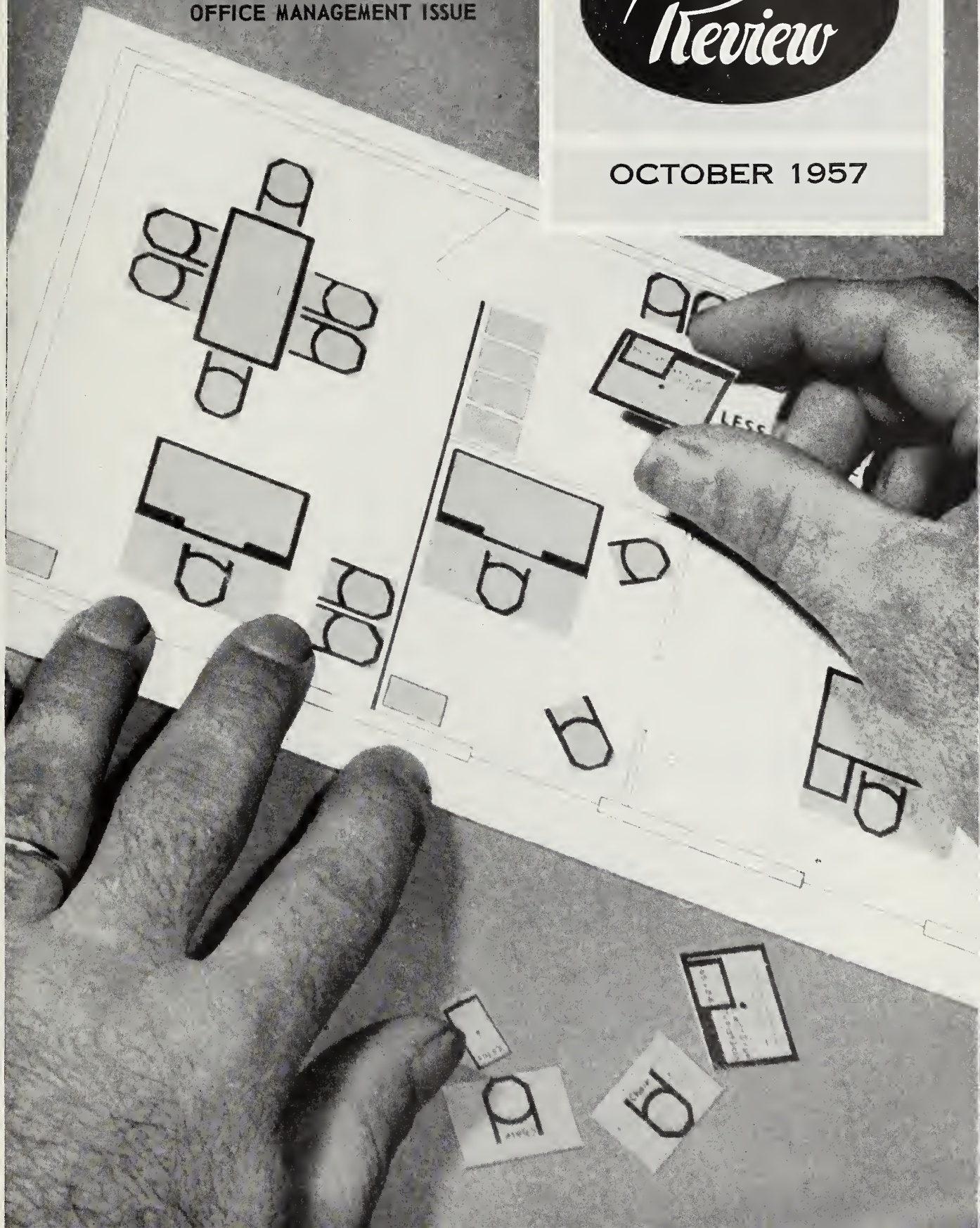
Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



OFFICE MANAGEMENT ISSUE



OCTOBER 1957





# EXTENSION SERVICE *Review*

Official monthly publication of  
Cooperative Extension Service:  
U. S. Department of Agriculture  
and State Land-Grant Colleges  
and Universities cooperating.

Prepared in  
Division of Information Programs  
Federal Extension Service, USDA  
Washington 25, D. C.

Division Director: *Lester A. Schlup*

Editor: *Edward H. Roche*

## In This Issue

Page	
203	Daily records . . . chore or rich harvest
204	Sharpening your communicability
205	Unlocking the doors to good public relations
206	The office secretary — envoy of good will
207	Secretaries — how do you rate?
208	Con - "templating" better office layout . . .
210	Know your county people
212	Your efficiency is showing
213	Actions speak louder . . .
215	Summary of memorandum of understanding
216	Signs of the times

The Extension Service Review is published monthly by direction of the Secretary of Agriculture as administrative information required for the proper transaction of the public business. Use of funds for printing this publication approved by the Director of the Bureau of the Budget (July 31, 1955).

**T**he *Extension Service Review* is for Extension educators—in County, State and Federal Extension agencies—who work directly or indirectly to help people learn how to use the newest findings in agriculture and home economics research to bring about a more abundant life for themselves and their community.

The Review offers the Extension worker, in his role of educational leader, professional guideposts, new routes, and tools for speedier, more successful endeavor. Through this exchange of methods, tried and found successful by Extension agents, the Review serves as a source of ideas and useful information on how to reach people and thus help them utilize more fully their own resources, to farm more efficiently, and to make the home and community a better place to live.

Vol. 28

October 1957

No. 10

## EAR TO THE GROUND

"Sometimes we can't see the forest for the trees." This old saw seems particularly apropos when talking about good office management, the subject featured in this issue. (And as a lead sentence it came naturally to the new editor, formerly employed in the forestry field.)

Everyone agrees that the principles pointed up in this issue—well-planned office layouts, accurate records, secretarial courtesy, staff conferences, improving public relations—are all vital to an efficient operation. But sometimes we're so close to the trees—our everyday work—that we overlook the obvious in the whole picture. It pays dividends to stop once in a while and take an overall look. Perhaps we'll find some areas where a little improvement will help utilize our working hours to best advantage.

Are your offices crowded? The article on planning furniture and equipment layouts has many tips on using space to best advantage.

Do you dread report writing? Keeping regular records of farm and home visits, as well as office callers, will put the facts at your fingertips when it's report-writing time.

What's the first impression (usually most lasting) of visitors entering your office? The receptionist's greeting, which sets the tone for the whole visit, is only one of many phases of public relations discussed.

These are just a sampling of the wealth of how-to-improve-your-office ideas contained in this issue. If you find some that help you streamline your operations (and perhaps give you more time to carry on your regular extension work), then this special issue will have accomplished its purpose.

The November issue will highlight Farm and Home Development. We'll have some top-notch articles telling how several States are successfully using this method of working with farm families.—EHR

## ON THE COVER

Office space planning is easy and accurate with the templating method.

Using a miniature floor plan, scale-size cutouts (templates) of furniture and equipment can be moved around to find the most efficient arrangement. See page 208 for article on planning better office layouts.

The Review is issued free by law to workers engaged in extension activities. Others may obtain copies from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., at 15 cents per copy or by subscription at \$1.50 a year, domestic, and \$2.00, foreign.

# DAILY RECORDS . . .

## Chore or Rich Harvest?

by C. HERMAN WELCH, JR.  
Federal Extension Service

To some county extension agents, keeping a daily record is a chore that takes more time than it's worth. Perhaps that is because they don't do anything with the information recorded, or possibly they are recording more than is needed.

There are also agents who don't believe in keeping records, so their office secretaries are put in the difficult position of trying to prepare the monthly statistical reports without facts. To these agents, records are a pain in the neck.

Other agents get so wrapped up in keeping records that they tend to forget that their main job is helping people to help themselves. To an outsider it looks like the agent is a slave to the records rather than their master.

### Measure of Progress

Then there are some agents who take the time to analyze the information compiled from their daily records, and check it against their plan of work to see if they are going in the right direction and at a satis-

factory rate of speed. To this group, daily records become a rich harvest of information.

Perhaps we in Extension have it easy as far as records and reports are concerned. At the same time, we need to improve our records and recordkeeping if we are going to keep our leadership. No longer can we shrug off office work as an unimportant part of our work, that records need not be kept.

### Turning Chore into Harvest

Extension has passed the stage where a few scratches in a pocket notebook will fill the bill. It needs more than that. A little thought can easily make your present chore a rich harvest and help you to do a better extension job. Here is what agents in a couple of counties have done:

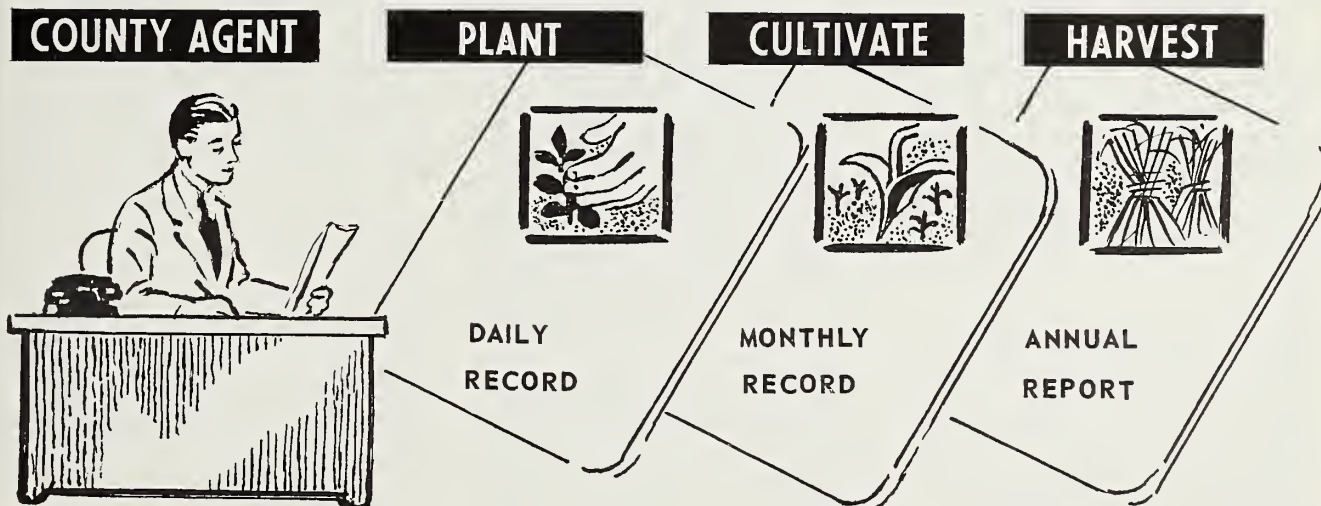
You may have read how the agents in Fairfax County, Va., kept a record of office and telephone calls to determine subject matter interests of their county people (EXTENSION SERVICE REVIEW, August 1955). From these

records the agents were able to plan their work for the coming year to better meet the needs of the people. Interestingly, the daily records helped to prove that they needed extra staff, which since then has been added.

An agent in a western county once told of trying to get additional help for his office without success. His requests were based on estimated numbers of office calls, telephone calls, and letters written. Later, the State office asked all agents to try out three suggested daily record forms and let them know which they preferred. The agent did so and was surprised to find that an actual count of office activities far exceeded the estimates he had been using as a basis for his requests. He had been hurting his own cause by not having figures compiled from daily records.

Agents in Finney County, Kans., developed an individual contact record that they use in the office and field. Made in 3 by 5 inch pads, the records are carried in shirt pocket or purse, or kept on their desk. Key to the record's success is the way the agents and office secretaries have trained themselves to use it. When the telephone rings, they reach for the phone with one hand and their pencil and contact record pad with the other hand. Almost automatically, they record name of caller, type of contact (phone call), and subject matter discussed.

The same form is used for farm  
(Continued on page 215)







# Sharpening your Communicability

by C. A. BOND  
Extension Editor, Washington

CERTAINLY the State of Washington makes no claim to perfection in training and helping county extension workers in their job of communications. Boiled down to its essence, our training program would be about like this: Offer some stimulation and guidance, help where it's needed or requested, and then stand clear lest we be stomped in the rush.

It's axiomatic that most communications training should be with county personnel because they do the bulk of communications work with the ultimate consumer — the farm family. However, the training won't work unless it has the blessing of administration, the cooperation of supervisors, the understanding of subject-matter specialists, and integration with broad training in extension methods and philosophy. This simply means that we try to get other folks to do our work.

## **"Built-In" Program**

We believe that communications techniques cover more than the use of mass media. Techniques are merely tools for doing extension work. Therefore, the core of our program is a "built-in" communications program. This means that communications should be planned as a part of the regular job—and carried out that way, too.

When radio first loomed as a communications method, some agents rebelled and said, "This is not a part of my regular work." Later, they found that radio strengthened their "regular work" and became earnest practitioners of the microphonic art.

The point is that the complaining

agents had to learn for themselves that radio was good for them. You can pray and exhort, you can demonstrate and exhibit, but when it comes right down to it, folks have to train themselves. About all we so-called professionals can do is to give 'em a chance.

This seems to be easier to do in teaching a skill, such as how to write a news story, than it is in teaching a concept such as a "built-in" communications program. We haven't progressed a great way in teaching this concept in Washington State, but we're still trying. A few months ago an agent said, "By gosh, I believe what we ought to do in my county is to plan our news program around our projects and not just send out a batch of stories every week."

This business of being a professional communicator can be a handicap in technique training. It's awfully easy for a trainee to say, "Sure, Al Bond can write a news story, after all, that's what he gets paid for. But me, I'm an agronomist, not a newspaperman. I just can't do it." But, if he is allowed to discover that other subject-matter trained persons can write and do it well, then maybe he will take his pen in hand. So we try to pass around examples of good jobs that agents are doing, ways that have proved successful, in hopes that somebody else will go and do likewise—or maybe even better.

At Washington State we're not blessed with a large staff. We can't relieve anybody of production chores to give full time to training. We all take a hand in it. Our methods are by no means revolutionary. We hold

workshops when we can, both state-wide and for districts and counties. We publish a training letter about every month, in which we try to teach by indirection, not by holding up a sign saying, "instruction is now about to begin."

We invite agents to consult with us on their problems and we ask advice from supervisors as to where help is needed and how we can best give it. We sometimes "take the male bovine by the front corners" and write letters to agents, praising them for a good job and pointing out with examples how they might have improved a bit of writing or broadcasting here and there.


## **Emphasis on Clarity**

Aside from harping on a "built-in" communications program, we also continually press for clarity. That's the main thing. If you can express yourself clearly, you don't have to worry about how many courses in journalism or public speaking you've had. This, of course, means you must define your audience, reach it in terms which it will understand, and find out whether it has understood.

There's nothing unusual in that. Chances are that most State editorial offices are doing the same thing. And chances are they'll join the "late Miss Portia" in saying, "If to do were as good as to know what were good to do, then chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages, princes' palaces . . . I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching."

# UNLOCKING THE DOORS TO GOOD PUBLIC RELATIONS

by HAROLD B. SWANSON, *Extension Editor, Minnesota*



the staff, we consider the office secretary the 'key' member on the team around whom the whole extension program unfolds. Her telephone 'hello,' her smile, and her courteous replies to all callers set the atmosphere for the office and make the first impression on the public."

Standard procedure among secretaries, of course, is to usher guests to the agent they wish to see or provide them with a chair and magazines, bulletins, or other reading material if they have to wait.

A bigger problem, however, arises when the agent is out. Many Minnesota secretaries use these opportunities to tell visitors a little about county extension work.

## *Explain Extension's Function*

Eugene Pilgram, Chippewa County agent, reports that his secretary explains to visitors or callers that the agent is out on the job, actually telling them where the agent is and what he is doing. This helps acquaint visitors with the nature of the extension job. At the same time, the secretary tries to aid them with bulletins and other information so they won't go away emptyhanded. If there is a question or message, naturally, it's left for the appropriate agent to answer as soon as he or she returns.

Most secretaries take notes on the questions and problems posed by visitors, making sure to get their complete names and addresses for later followup. Nobles County's Ross Huntsinger finds that such a list on his daily sheet is a valuable reference.

As in many offices, Houston County agent Wayne Hanson keeps his secretary well informed as to his whereabouts and when he expects to return.

Here the responsibility rests squarely on the agent's shoulders—a responsibility that helps the secretary and creates better relationships with the public.

Don Hasbargen and his Mower County staff make it a point to keep the office secretary informed on seasonal topics. During the past summer, for example, she was given the grasshopper control recommendations to keep on her desk so that she could answer calls on this important problem when the agents were out.

## *Value of Staff Meetings*

Also basic to good relations within the staff and with the public is keeping all the staff informed of what is going on and making sure that everyone understands and appreciates his or her part of any job.

Monday morning conferences are a traditional method of doing this. Here agents become familiar with what others are doing and here, too, many agents schedule circular letters and other big jobs the office secretary must handle.

In Mower County the workload is planned even further ahead. The office staff starts working on the county fair in January when they make a list of signs, posters, and letters that have to go out between then and county fair time. The 4-H Club newsletter and Farm and Home Science mailings are planned well in advance, too.

Most agents agree, however, that the weekly conference is not enough and that the staff should meet together more often, even if only over a cup of coffee in a separate office. "Admittedly," says Agent Huntsinger,

*(Continued on page 214)*

**M**AY I help you? Those cheerful and simple everyday words greet visitors when they enter most Minnesota county extension offices.

They reflect an attitude of service—one of the keys to improved public relations and better working conditions in every extension office. In this article we review a few similar everyday ideas, familiar to most of you, that some of our agents use to improve their public relations, their office efficiency, and their communications with county leaders and mass media.

## *First Impression Important*

First, let's look at the way our secretaries greet and meet the public, either on the phone or as office visitors. G. J. Kunau, Goodhue County agent, has recognized the important part secretaries play in these words:

"While the county agricultural agent is the administrative head of





# The Office Secretary

## — Envoy of Good Will

by SHIRLEY BARLOW  
Federal Extension Service

**T**HE secretary is the one person who can make or break the public relations of her office. Answering phone calls, greeting visitors, or replying to letters are some of the main opportunities for the Extension Service ambassador to cement relations between the Service and the public. All the less publicized duties around the office and the secretary's own attitude and appearance also add up in the office's personality score.

When someone calls on the telephone, as far as he is concerned the secretary is the Extension Service. If she sounds clear and interested, the caller's first opinion of the Service is favorable. A cheerful, courteous, smiling telephone voice is as necessary as a courteous manner. In answering the phone she briefly identifies the office. If the agent or specialist is not there or is in conference, she volunteers her assistance, refers the call to someone who can help, or takes a message and places it on the desk of the person responsible for that work. (Make arrangements to have your telephone answered at all times.)

Visitors form their first impressions of the office and the Extension Service solely on the secretary's reception. The same cheerful, courteous voice used on the telephone must be backed up with an outward appearance and manner to match. The secretary hasn't much time to establish rapport, but it can be the deciding factor in office-visitor good feelings.

Letters are "ambassadors of good will." They must be properly centered,

with even margins, and neat erasures. The dictionary should be consulted if there is the slightest doubt about spelling or dividing a word. The secretary does not release a letter until she can say, "This is a job well done!" (Take care of your typewriter. Clean it daily. Cover the machine when it is not in use.)

In the small office, the secretary may become, practically speaking, the office manager more familiar with office routines and requirements than the agent or specialist himself. She protects her boss from unimportant interruptions and details, but checks first to make certain that she is doing it in accordance with his wishes. He, too, realizes his obligation to the public he serves.

The secretary is required to keep regular office hours and since special-



The author, Shirley Barlow, is administrative assistant in the Division of Agricultural Economics Programs.

ists and agents are away from the office much of the time, it is doubly necessary for her to be punctual. The efficient secretary arrives a few minutes early in the morning to arrange the boss' desk as well as her own and check the schedule for the day. (Have you tried clearing up your desk before leaving in the evening? The valuable morning time, when your mind is freshest, can then be spent doing more important jobs.)

### *Efficient Managing*

Knowledge of the fundamentals of filing is necessary so that the secretary can promptly produce correspondence and reports when they are needed. A filing system should be adapted to the particular needs of the office, yet not be so complex as to keep anyone else from finding material in an emergency. On a recurring basis, she determines what material may be destroyed; if there is any doubt, she should check with her boss.

Opening all mail, except that marked personal or confidential, is the responsibility of the extension secretary. Letters, publications, and other material should be arranged in order of their importance and routed for proper handling. Followup on the mail is necessary to be certain that letters are not neglected.

As the secretary becomes familiar with the office and with the boss' preferences, she can save his time by preparing replies, either in final form or rough draft, collecting required information and enclosures.

(Continued on page 214)



# Secretaries — How Do You Rate?

*Check yourself now . . . then  
recheck this list in 6 months*  
(Borrowed from Remington Rand)



## *You are well-dressed*

Appropriate clothing . . . . .	3
Grooming . . . . .	3
Personal neatness . . . . .	4
—	
	10

## *You are pleasant*

Even-tempered under strain . . . . .	2
Take criticism without resentment . . . . .	2
Sense of humor . . . . .	2
Control moods . . . . .	2
Control temper . . . . .	2
—	
	10

## *You are a clam*



Silence concerning business affairs . . . . .	7
(This is a MUST)	
Silence concerning personal troubles . . . . .	1
Silence concerning office feuds and gossip . . . . .	2
—	
	10

## *You are a screen*

Relieve agent of details . . . . .	4
Successfully protect him from unimpor- tant interruptions . . . . .	3
Compose letters you can handle . . . . .	3
—	
	10



## *You soak up knowledge*

Understand and abide by agency policies . . . . .	3
Study supplementary courses . . . . .	2
Increase your fund of general in- formation . . . . .	2
Continually improve your knowl- edge of the business or profes- sion of which you are a part . . . . .	3
—	
	10

## *You have telephone charm*

Voice pleasant—tone clear . . . . .	4
Telephone tact . . . . .	4
Obtain accurate information over phone . . . . .	2
—	
	10



## *You are Johnny-on-the-spot*

There when the boss wants you . . . . .	3
On time consistently . . . . .	3
Prompt in answering telephone . . . . .	2
Work late cheerfully when neces- sary . . . . .	2
—	
	10

## *You are quick on the trigger*

Initiative in an emergency . . . . .	2
Assemble data before boss calls for it . . . . .	2
Understand material dictated . . . . .	2
Alert to prevent errors . . . . .	2
Always check figures and dates . . . . .	2
—	
	10



## *You have a steel-trap memory*

Remember instructions . . . . .	4
Remember names and faces . . . . .	3
Remember routine details . . . . .	3
—	
	10

## *You are truly humble*

Pleasant toward associates . . . . .	3
Pleasant toward outsiders . . . . .	3
Perform personal duties for boss cheer- fully . . . . .	2
Allow boss to take credit for your work . . . . .	2
—	
	10



## *You are a good housekeeper*

Keep agent's office in order . . . . .	3
Keep your own desk and type- writer in order . . . . .	2
Organize efficient office routine . . . . .	3
Always have supplies on hand . . . . .	2
—	
	10

## *You are loyal to your boss*

Put his interest first . . . . .	4
Tactfully prevent difficulties . . . . .	2
Smooth them out when they occur . . . . .	2
Speak of agent always in terms of re- spect and admiration . . . . .	2
—	
	10

## *Your letters are a work of art*

Uniform printwork . . . . .	3
Even margins . . . . .	2
Well-centered . . . . .	2
No smudge . . . . .	2
Correct spelling . . . . .	2
Correct grammar . . . . .	2
Correct punctuation . . . . .	2
—	
	15



## *What's your rating?*

Super secretary . . . . .	120
Good but not super . . . . .	107
Better than average . . . . .	96
Lots of competition down here . . . . .	82
You'd better study . . . . .	70

# Con — "Templating" Better Office Layout . .

by JOHN SPEIDEL  
Federal Extension Service

**E**VEN though you may not have the best office space, you can still make the best use of available space through careful planning and by applying the general principles of office layout. In this article you'll find "how-to-do-it" information you can use in analyzing your office layout and improving it.

Management specialists often use the method of "templating" to analyze the organization of office space. They use an accurate office plan and movable, scale-size cutouts (templates) of office furniture and equipment. They simply place the models on the floor plan as equipment is now positioned and move the models around in various ways to find better arrangements. It's all done in miniature, but to accurate scale. Maybe you've planned furniture rearrangement in your own home in this same way.

You can get such a free office space planning kit from the Federal Extension Service.

## *Discard Non-Essentials*

In most offices the number one office layout problem generally is not enough space. Therefore the usual first step to improve layout is to dispose of all furniture and equipment that are not essential for your office to function efficiently. If you're strict and save only essential necessities, you'll likely be surprised at how much you can discard.

After disposing of equipment not in use, look over the books and records stored in bookcases and file cabinets. Do you screen your reference files each year to remove obsolete material? Do you file "inactive" correspondence and reports in office space?

Most offices file only correspondence and reports for the current year and one previous fiscal year. Older records go into the "inactive" file. Normally you use these records so little that you can file them in storage space outside the office.

Do you set up correspondence files so it's easy to dispose of records periodically that are not required for permanent reference? Do you keep general reference files at one point for use by all agents, or does each agent maintain his own file of mimeographed communications from the

State office? Do you file letters of inquiry that are answered by sending a bulletin? A common practice is to return the letter with the bulletin.

## *Analyze Equipment Sizes*

After disposing of nonessential equipment, it is desirable to study each remaining item to decide whether it is of the proper type and size. Many offices are saving 25 percent in floor space used for files by changing from 4-drawer to 5-drawer file cabinets. (The height of 5-drawer



Less-than-ceiling height partitions give privacy without interfering with light and ventilation.



cabinets is only about half a drawer higher than 4-drawer cabinets.)

Could you use smaller desks? Would a new executive conference desk eliminate the need for the table used for conferences of 5 or 6 people? (A conference-type desk is pictured on page 170, *EXTENSION SERVICE REVIEW*, August 1957.) Are legal-size files essential because of the size of material filed, or do you use them because they are "available?" Could you substitute a single 4- or 5-drawer file cabinet for two 2-drawer cabinets?

### Planning Layout

After making all practicable adjustments in equipment, then cut templates for each remaining item. Place these on the office floor plan in positions corresponding to their present location in the office. You're now ready to begin analyzing your office layout.

Here are some generally recognized principles you'll want to consider. Much of this and other information in this article comes from the Real Estate Division, Office of Plant and Operations, USDA.

1. The clerk who acts as the office

receptionist should be located as near the entrance as is practicable.

2. For desks facing in the same direction, allow at least 3 feet between the back of one desk and the front of the next desk. If you place more than 2 desks side by side in rows without intervening aisles, increase this minimum distance to 4 feet. Aisles should be at least 3 feet wide.

3. If practicable, files should be placed against walls or railings.

4. Never arrange desks and chairs so that employees or visitors face the windows.

5. Place heavy equipment against walls or columns.

6. Be safety conscious. Do not obstruct exits, corridors, or stairways. Do not place electrical cords where someone might trip over them.

### Space Dividers

7. Whenever possible, provide separate private offices for agricultural agents, home agents, and 4-H Club agents. Private offices are desirable for other agents when space is available.

But you'll have to weigh the need for private offices against the advantages of better light and ventila-

### Free Planning Kits Available

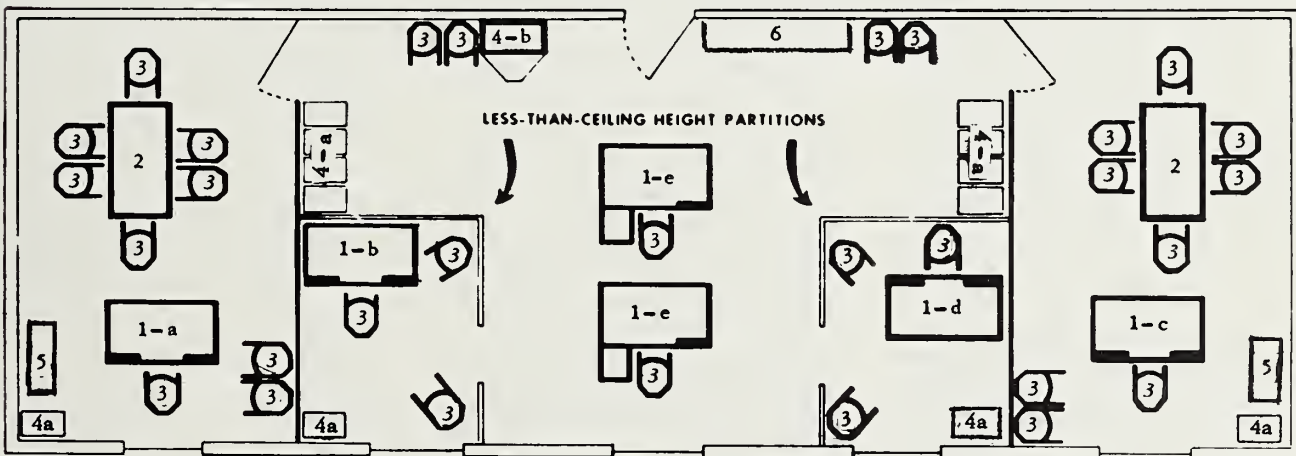
It's easy, accurate, and lots of fun to analyze your office space layout with the free space planning kit. It contains a sheet of templates (cutouts) for most office furniture and equipment, and a sheet of rectangular ruled paper for preparing the office floor plan. Detailed instructions come with the kit. Simply write to the Division of Management Operations, Federal Extension Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

tion and less space needed because of large open areas. In some cases you might compromise by using railings, a "wall" of file cabinets, or less-than-ceiling height partitions to provide partial privacy. The latter may be obtained in various sizes from office equipment suppliers. (See illustration on page 208.)

8. Whenever practical, locate mimeograph and other duplicating or mailing equipment in separate offices to reduce noise. If you don't have another room, separate the duplicating and mailing space from other office space by use of file cabinets or partitions. Use acoustic treatment on ceiling if possible. Put pads under typewriters as another way to cut down on noise.

(Continued on page 211)

SUGGESTED SPACE LAYOUT FOR COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE\*



#### 1. Desks

- a. County Agent
- b. Assistant County Agent
- c. Home Demonstration Agent
- d. Assistant Home Demonstration Agent
- e. Secretaries

#### 2. Tables

- 3. Chairs
- 4. Cabinets
  - a. Filing
  - b. Supply

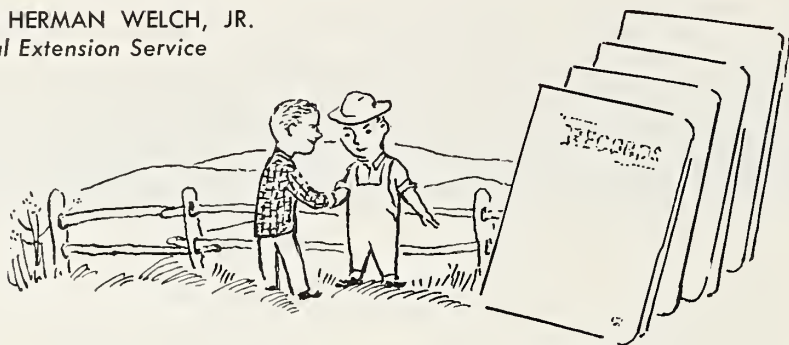
#### 5. Bookcases

- 6. Bulletin Rack

\*Note: Does not include space for storage, mimeograph or mailing facilities.

# Know Your County People

by C. HERMAN WELCH, JR.  
Federal Extension Service



**K**NOWING county extension workers, I had my doubts that they would be interested in keeping a cumulative record of progress made by the individual families they worked with. But, when you are asked to find out, you do just that. So, early in 1954, I started looking for the answer.

First, I was rather surprised to learn of individual agents who were already keeping such records. A study of those records provided a starting point. Then, with the help of district agents in 6 States, 9 counties were selected where it was believed the agents might be interested enough to cooperate in a developmental project. These counties represented different-sized staffs, workloads of secretaries, office arrangements, degrees of urban extension work, types of farming, and other factors that affect the way extension work is done in a county.

## *Adaptable to Needs*

For over 2 years, the 35 agents in these counties have been keeping records on fifty to several hundred families. The record consists of a folder for each family in which is recorded background information about the family, the farm, the home, children enrolled in 4-H Club work, leadership of the family in extension work and also their participation in farm, civic, and community groups. Item headings in each of these sections are of a general nature—making it possible for each county to adapt

them to their own specific needs.

Insert sheets provide a place to record chronologically, for farm and home, recommendations or actions planned with extension assistance and the actions or changes made by the family. No attempt is made to record every contact extension has with a family.

## *Advantages Reported*

As I visit these counties from time to time, I find that my first hunch was wrong. These agents are now telling me of some of the advantages they find in keeping these records. Here are some of their comments:

"I found these records a big help when I started working in this county. Before visiting a family I could look at their folder and then go out to their place feeling that I knew them. By studying what the previous agent had recommended, I was able to start where she left off. I believe the families appreciated this, too."

"Reviewing a folder before visiting a family reminds me of things to follow up. It also provides an opportunity to see how practical my recommendations were. Sometimes I find that the family needs a little more help than I was able to give them earlier."

"Since keeping these records I have made it a practice to inquire as to the education and previous experience of a family. As a consequence, I have been able to locate several people

whose college major was in subject-matter areas where we needed local leaders."

"The individual family record folder has become the place where we file everything about the farm, home, or family. This has simplified our having to locate information."

"We find that it is possible to better coordinate our work with these families, for each agent can see what the other is doing to help the family. There is also another advantage—when I drive into a farm yard and am greeted by the wife, I can ask how she likes her remodeled kitchen or whatever the project the home agent has been advising on. It helps to give the feeling that we agents are interested in everything that the family is doing."

## *Similar to Medical Record*

"When someone comes in the office to see one of us agents, the secretary gets out the family's record folder and puts it on our desk. I find that the background information in the folder helps me in discussing the problem. If the information is not given, I write it down at the time we discuss the problem. I also jot down the recommendation or decision made. It's a big help and all rather simple. I suppose you could compare it to your medical record that the doctor compiles when you visit him or the dentist's record of teeth filled and those to keep an eye on."

"When I return to the office from a trip in the country I stop at the secretary's desk and tell her of recommendations or decisions made or practices families have adopted. She takes it down in shorthand and makes the entries on the individual records when she has the time. It works out OK."

"Many of my former 4-H Club members use my name as a character reference. When you have been in the county as long as I have, it gets to be quite a task to remember some of them. A record of this kind is a big help."

"I only wish I had started keeping these records when I came to the county over 20 years ago. Many of our families have made tremendous progress during that time. What a story each would make if I only had



a documented record of our assistance and their accomplishments."

While it may be too early to answer the original question with any degree of assurance, it certainly looks now as if it would be practical for agents to keep such records. If any agents are interested, they can obtain additional information from the author.

## *Here's Proof . . . Records Are Useful*

Just out of college, the young man was applying for his first fulltime job. References? He had been active for several years in 4-H Club work as a teen-ager and thought immediately of his county agent.

What can an agent write in answer to a reference check? Does he really know the person?

If the agent were Paul B. Gwin, now retired Geary County, Kans., agricultural agent, he could probably give a positive recommendation for the boy as well as a complete account of his family.

Gwin and office secretary Irene Rogers kept a record of the families with whom they worked in extension programs. They know the address, type of farm or business, number, ages and names of children, and the extension programs in which families have cooperated. They are acquainted with the members of every Geary County rural family.

Three-fourth of the Geary County farm boys and girls are 4-H members for at least 1 year. Many are or have been 5- to 10-year members. The county office has a record of the years each one was a member, his projects, achievements, and schooling.

If the 4-H "graduates" locate in the county, they are kept in contact with extension programs as rural life members, 4-H leaders, and members of women's units or men's programs. Those who leave the county can still be reached through their parents.

As proof of the accuracy of the records, when Gwin retired recently the office was able to contact 90 percent of the 4-H Club members over the past 30 years.

## **OFFICE LAYOUT** *(Continued from page 209)*

9. Provide comfortable seating arrangements for visitors to use while waiting. Remember coat and hat racks too.

10. Before placing file cabinets or other above-window-height equipment between windows and workers, consider the effect on ventilation and light.

11. An arrangement which provides for all desks facing in the same direction presents an orderly appearance.

12. Locate records and equipment at point of greatest use.

13. Many Federal buildings, except those for postal use only, have conference or civil service examination rooms that you may use for meetings, regardless of whether your office is located in a Federal building. You can hold night meetings in these rooms if the route to them does not go through postal space. You can get authority to use such facilities through the person in your State office who handles Federal building space matters.

### *Signs Are Important*

14. Provide for adequate identification of your office, both inside and outside the building if possible. (See article about office signs on page 216 of this issue.)

15. Illumination at all points should be free from glare and ample for the type of work being done. Highly polished desk tops, such as glass, may cause excessive glare unless covered by desk pads or other non-reflecting material. The table below shows the minimum standards of illumination recommended by the Illuminating Engineering Society and approved by the American Standards Association. Your local electric utility will be glad to make a lighting survey for you.

<i>Area</i>		<i>Minimum Foot-candles (At 30 inches above floor)</i>
Corridors and stairways . . . . .		5
Conference rooms . . . . .		25
Intermittent desk work, mailing, sorting . . . . .		30
Bookkeeping, typing, accounting and stenographic work . . . . .		50
Operation of business machines . . . . .		50-100

16. The color and light reflection of walls, ceilings, floors, and office equipment, especially desk tops, are almost as important as the intensity and distribution of light. "Flat" colors that do not cause glare are essential. White ceilings are usually preferred; for walls, floors, furniture and work surfaces, light-colored pastel shades, particularly grays and greens, are best.

### *Cutting Down Glare*

17. The brighter your lights, the greater is your problem of glare. Unshielded light fixtures may cause glare; so may bright window areas in the line of vision, reflection from glass desk tops or pictures, or in some cases the difference in contrast between work (paper) and the work surface (desk top).

Glare from any source causes constant muscular adjustments in the eye with resultant fatigue and headaches. Therefore, as lighting goes above 25 foot-candles, pay special attention to cutting down glare. How? By adequate shielding of light fixtures, use of venetian blinds or shades on windows, proper placement of desks, and the use of light-colored, low-contrast, dull-finish work surfaces.

18. Provide enough cabinet and storage space to eliminate need for stacking books, magazines, papers and other materials on top of files or other office equipment.

19. Sometimes it is practicable to change the location of doors, or the way they open, to provide more useable office space.

Maybe you don't have adequate space for all workers or must put off improvements until equipment funds become available. But, by analyzing your space layout now, you can probably make a few significant improvements and the analysis could be used for a long-range office improvement plan to be put in action when funds are available.



# Your Efficiency Is Showing

by CHARLES H. BURCH  
Extension Editor, Colorado

**T**HE reports we get from a county extension office actually are a mirror. They reflect the efficiency of the office from which they come, says Frank Taylor, administrative assistant for the Colorado Agricultural Extension Service. Taylor is a "bug" on office efficiency. He runs a smart shop, and he likes to see others running smoothly, too.

The value of office management shows in many cases on Taylor's records. For example:

"The reports we used to get from one of our key county offices came in late, disorganized, full of inaccuracies.

"Then a new agent came in. He talked the county commissioners into getting some new furniture. He set up a new filing system. He took time to train the secretaries, and he insisted on accuracy. Now, we get neat, accurate letters from that office. Reports and records are complete and accurate."

## Streamline Operations

A common complaint among county extension workers is about the mountains of paperwork which they must process. "Business and government are growing more complex," Taylor says. "This means an increase, rather than a decrease, in the volume of paperwork.

"Thus, the office manager of the future must learn to simplify and mechanize the paperwork. It is the only way he can survive."

Because of the growing complexities in office management, the 1956 Colorado extension conference was built around office efficiency. It was the agents, not the administrators and supervisors, who requested this type of program.

For 3 days, the Colorado extension staff delved into management programs—in workshop groups and panel and group discussions. Outside talent was drawn from the Denver chapter of the National Office Management Association.

## Aid in Charting Course

Chief speaker was Joe Miller, assistant comptroller of the Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Co., who defined the office as the nerve center of the organization.

"It is a place in which we accumulate and store information through records that tell us where we have been, where we are, and where we are going," he said. "Records are becoming increasingly important to the management of business and government organizations. Without prompt and accurate records, management is 'flying blind.' It cannot afford to take that risk. A reputation for promptness, neatness, reliability, dependability, and courtesy is a valuable asset."

Miller listed three principles useful in guiding management:

1. Management is not the direction of things; it is the development of people.
2. Everything that an organization accomplishes is done by and through people.
3. Management is the process of getting the job done, regardless of what the job is.

Miller explained that management is plagued with several ills—turnover, short labor market, training problems, and inadequate pay scales. "Finding solutions to our problems is not the only excuse for our jobs as managers. However, a manager who can plan and organize to keep out of trouble is better than one who is an expert at getting out of trouble," Miller pointed out in his summary.

Taylor believes the extension conference program's success was due to the fact that extension workers recognize that their offices must run efficiently. Group discussions were very active. Consultants were besieged with questions. Several agents stopped by to express appreciation for the help they received. And, best of all, the conference program resulted in smoother running offices.

## Began with Agents' Handbook

The conference program capped several years of efforts by the Colorado Extension Service. Starting point for the program was a Manual for Extension Agents, which was developed in 1954 by Sherman Hoar, Colorado's county agent leader.

The manual, now being revised, sets down in a concise, easy-to-read manner the basic extension policies as well as methods of conducting extension work in county offices.

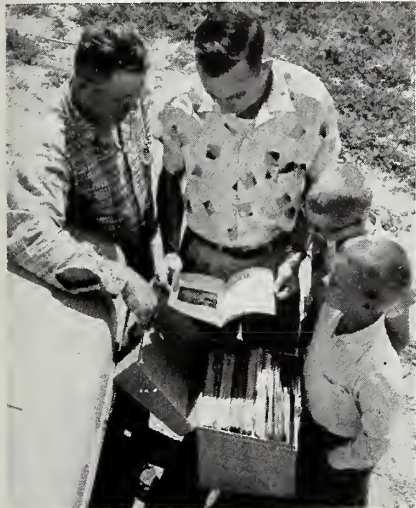
After completion of the conference, Hoar teamed up with Taylor to hold district workshops throughout the State. All agents and their secretaries were invited to attend the 1-day workshops.

These district sessions covered a wide range of office problems—office

(Continued on page 213)



Portable File Cases  
Aid Bulletin Distribution



Ray Cogburn (center), assistant county agricultural agent for Garfield County, Colo., shows new bulletins to Melvin Pretti and his two sons, Lonnie and Rodney. The metal file cases, which hold more than 100 bulletins, are carried by both Cogburn and the county agent, Dick Elliott, when they travel over the county.

Farmers, homemakers, and 4-H Club members can look over the available bulletins, choose the ones they want, and place their orders. The bulletins are mailed when the agents return to their offices. In some cases, extra copies are carried along and cooperators can get the requested bulletins on the spot.

New publications are added to the file as they become available and the agents revise their selection frequently to keep the list current. An index of the bulletin list is kept at the front of the file.

**YOUR EFFICIENCY**  
(Continued from page 212)

arrangement, filing, penalty mail regulations, methods of preparing expense accounts and other necessary records, office relationships, division of secretary's time between agents, distribution and display of bulletins, daily records, and reports.

Because of numerous requests, another series of workshops on office management is planned in the near

*Actions Speak Louder . . .*

We all subscribe to a testament of faith in neighborliness and we dedicate our best efforts to encouraging camaraderie and material helpfulness. We light a bright candle to illuminate a friendly spirit of understanding among those with whom we are closely associated. In a larger dimension, these are the aims of the nationwide movement to bring farm and city folks closer together.

Once again and, for the third time, National Farm-City Week is in the offing. Extension workers have made many contributions throughout the last year, and for many years, to the objective of linking town and country folks in better understanding of each other's problems and situations. Rural-urban dinners, farmer-businessmen meetings, farm and city tours, jointly sponsored square dances, open houses, picnics, and many other interesting and informative events have been organized by extension workers and farm people in cooperation with their friends in the city.

Arrangements are already well under way to develop a nationwide, public-understanding backdrop to the local efforts of extension workers and cooperating groups. The national organizational web is being strengthened this year by the coordinating agency, Kiwanis International, guided by a citizens' steering committee representing agricultural, business,

educational, and civic interests, under the chairmanship of Glenn Sample, Information Director of the Indiana Farm Bureau. Regional and State farm-city committee chairmen, some of them State extension directors, have been appointed and are at work.

If you have not already begun to consult with local committees in perfecting plans for Farm-City Week's observance, you will undoubtedly be doing so very soon.

This year it is scheduled for November 22 to 28, the last and culminating day coinciding with Thanksgiving. It is designed to bring to a climax the many helpful activities undertaken by numerous organizations throughout the year.

As the Secretary of Agriculture said recently, "When farm and city people come together like this it is easier to see that no economic group can exist by and for itself alone. Farmers need city people and city people need farmers."

It is the hope of this organized farm-city movement to plant the seeds of mutual understanding and to nurture them so that they will flourish along the path of proud American ideals of freedom, initiative, and brotherhood.

**November 22-28, 1957**  
**FARM-CITY WEEK**

future. Designed for both agents and secretaries, the meetings will be patterned after the first series. They will review the procedures in office management for all newly hired personnel, in addition to bringing the old hands up to date.

The two administrators have followed up by meeting with new agents soon after their appointments. They discuss budgets, job classifications and promotion, relationships, reports, plans of work, and the organization and philosophy of the Cooperative Extension Service.

Two days prior to the opening of each general conference agents appointed within the past year are

invited to a separate conference program which is geared to their needs. Thus, they are given a chance to clear up any special problems which they might have on office procedure.

In addition, Taylor meets with all extension secretaries on the campus each year, reviewing office hours, relationships, penalty mailing regulations, procedures for answering telephones, and correspondence.

Training programs in office efficiency are worth the effort, Taylor says. He is a firm believer in the idea that it is possible to improve office procedures so you can do your work easier with less effort and manpower.



## ENVOY OF GOOD WILL

*(Continued from page 206)*

Reminding agents and specialists of items that might be overlooked is an important responsibility of the secretary. Controls on matters relating to her boss' work are important reminders for deadline dates on news notes, scheduled conferences, reports, and verbal or written assignments. Some system adapted to the needs of the office should be used for followup purposes.

Perhaps the most important aspect of a secretary's work is the art of getting along with people. She should constantly study and try to understand the actions of people about her. If you, as a secretary, have wondered why you were not selected to fill a higher position, take a look at your manners. Getting along with people simply means practicing good manners.

### *What the Boss Wants*

A recent survey of executives revealed that in general they want a feminine, well-groomed, and considerate secretary—one with taste and intelligence. They look for common sense, initiative, thoroughness, willingness to pitch in during a rush period, dependability, interest without curiosity, and punctuality. Loyalty is that little-mentioned quality which helps to seal a group of individual employees into a contented, smooth-running organization. The interests of the boss are first and he is spoken of always, to everyone, in terms of respect.

Think about your job and ways in which you can eliminate details or rearrange the order of a particular job to save time for yourself and your boss. There are many reference materials available—the secretarial handbooks, magazines, and other publications. The efficient secretary will use these tools, become familiar with sources of information, thus saving her time and that of others, eliminating questions which have already been answered.

As extension workers, secretaries are public servants, and it is their job to see that each individual who calls at the office in person or on the

telephone receives courteous, efficient, and pleasant service. A truly professional secretary is constantly aware of her representation of her vocation and of the effect of her actions both in and out of the office. The skill with which the extension secretary manages the office, greets callers, furnishes help and information, and answers the telephone reflects credit or discredit on the Extension Service.

## UNLOCKING THE DOORS

*(Continued from page 205)*

"we are great conferencers. I have found staff meetings necessary to meet schedules and other elements in the general plan of work together. Often they lead to a more even sharing of responsibilities."

Extension agents, too, have to be acquainted with others who serve agriculture and their work. To do this many counties throughout the country have "ag councils" made up of representatives from various governmental agencies serving agriculture.

In Mower County, this is done through the PAWS club. This professional agricultural workers group includes vets, vo-ag instructors, and Soil Conservation Service, Farmers Home Administration, and Extension agents. Meeting once a month the club calls upon outside speakers and discusses special problems such as liquid fertilizer, weed control, and so on. In this way, agencies tell a coordinated story to farm people.

Keeping the extension committee and local leaders informed about extension activities is still another facet of good extension relations.

Among other methods, Sibley County Agent Duane Wilson prepares a form he calls Monthly Report to Extension Committee. In it he gives a statistical breakdown of what the agents have done, leaving room for comments by the agents and the listing of coming events.

In Chippewa County the agents give a brief report on activities and progress at each extension committee meeting. Many counties illustrate these reports with slides and black and white photos.

C. J. Campbell, Kittson County agent, has a special mailing list for

the extension committee. Thus members receive notices of all meetings and events as well as general material.

In Mower County, the agents contact each member of the extension committee personally about major problems. In this way committee members have the opportunity of thinking about a problem before facing it in their planning meetings.

Most agents have found that they can enhance their relationships with the public and with leaders, as well as improve their teaching, through cooperation with the press and radio. This cooperation goes well beyond the mere issuance of releases.

### *Cementing Press Relations*

The old advice that the agent drop in on the newspaper editor or radio station manager occasionally is followed religiously by many Minnesota agents. Invitations to meetings, special help on important events, a call, a letter—all add to the fund of good will that mass media can provide Extension.

Houston County's Hanson points out that dependability and regularity are extremely important for best relationships with radio and press. He says, "Our two radio programs each week have been on continuously for many years. Regardless of workload, the tapes are at the station on time." He mails most of his weekly newspaper releases on Friday for the coming week's edition so papers have plenty of time to set them in type.

Campbell points out that all his news material is sent to all papers on the same day. Relationships, he says, are kept good by strict adherence to the timeliness of the articles and regular events.

Wilson says that an occasional cup of coffee over short and to-the-point releases helps his press program greatly.

Agents thus agree that the success they have with local news and radio depends more on regularity, dependability, personal contact, and timely subject matter than on brilliance of presentation.

There's nothing new in most of these ideas, but practicing the principles they point to will help Extension do a better educational job.



Orders are being accepted for the twelfth edition of *Entoma*, a directory of insect and plant pest control and informational handbook on major aspects of pest control.

Published by the Entomological Society of America, the directory leads to sources of pesticides, application equipment, control services, educational aids, other pest control supplies. Informational sections include: insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, rodenticides, safety measures, sprayer calibration, and tables of measure, weight, capacity, and dilution.

Individual copies are \$2, less 20 percent discount on single orders for all agricultural agents in a State. Orders should be sent to E. H. Fisher, Dept. of Entomology, University of Wisconsin, Madison 6, Wis.

## CHORE OR HARVEST

(Continued from page 203)

and home visits, meetings, news stories, bulletins distributed and other activities. Distribution of agent's time on the various projects worked on each day is also recorded.

The contact sheets are turned over to the office secretary each day. At the end of the month, without bothering the agents, she compiles the statistical portion of the monthly report for each agent. At the end of the year, special tabulations are sometimes made, such as by subject matter and geographic areas of county, to be sure that adequate coverage is being given.

### Aid in Program Planning

From these daily records, agents have a clear picture of problems facing the people of the county and are able to plan and carry out their program accordingly. Because they keep good daily records, the office secretary is able to compile the monthly statistical reports accurately and promptly without hounding the agents for the necessary information.

## Summary of

# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

(Editor's Note — On page 174 of the August issue of the Review, a statement on how national extension programs are developed was erroneously titled "Summary of Memorandum of Understanding." The Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Agriculture and the State Land-Grant Institutions is the legal authority by which the two cooperate in carrying out extension work. This Memorandum is basically the same for each institution. The following is a summary of the basic features of the Memorandum of Understanding.)

### I. The land-grant institution agrees:

1. To organize and maintain . . . a distinct administrative division for the management and conduct of all cooperative extension work in agriculture and home economics, with a director selected by the institution and satisfactory to the Department.
2. To administer through such division . . . all funds . . . for such work from appropriations.
3. To accept the responsibility for conducting all educational work in the fields of agriculture and home economics and subjects related thereto.

### II. The United States Department of Agriculture agrees:

1. To maintain . . . a Federal Extension Service which, under the direction of the Secretary,
  - (a) shall be charged with administration of the Smith-Lever Act . . .
  - (b) shall have primary responsibility for and leadership in all educational programs under the jurisdiction of the Department . . .
  - (c) shall be responsible for coordination of all educational phases of other programs of the Department . . . and
  - (d) shall act as liaison between the Department and . . . the land-grant colleges and universities on all matters relating to cooperative extension work . . .
2. To conduct through . . . (land-grant institution) . . . all extension work in agriculture and home economics . . . except those activities which by mutual agreement it is determined can most appropriately and effectively be carried out directly by the Department.

### III. The land-grant institution and the United States Department of Agriculture agree:

1. That, subject to the approval of the President of the . . . (land-grant institution) . . . and the Secretary of Agriculture . . . all cooperative extension work in agriculture and home economics . . . involving the use of Federal funds shall be planned under the joint supervision of the director of (Agricultural Extension Service) of . . . (State) . . . and the administrator of the Federal Extension Service; and that approved plans . . . shall be carried out . . . in accordance with the terms of individual project agreements.
2. That all State and county personnel appointed by the Department . . . shall be joint representatives of the . . . (land-grant institution) . . . and the United States Department of Agriculture . . .
3. That the cooperation between the . . . (land-grant institution) . . . and the United States Department of Agriculture shall be plainly set forth in all . . . printed matter . . . used in connection with cooperative extension work.



by HAROLD LINK  
*District Extension Leader, Kentucky*



With a sign like this, office callers can easily find Kentucky farm and home agents.

KENTUCKIANS generally can find their county extension offices with no trouble. Why? Because the Agricultural Extension Division of the University of Kentucky for several years has supplied each county with signs to identify the extension offices. Recently, some new signs were added to make locating the extension workers even easier.

The original signs (top right) are 12 x 26¾ inches, made of 18-gauge metal. Painted and printed on both sides in three baked-enamel colors, they carry identification in black lettering, with an outline map of the State in white on an overall green background. The name of the county can be added if desired.

But something more was needed

than this sign inside the building, identifying the door. Small additional signs were designed to supplement the larger sign. They were placed in hallways or on the exterior of buildings, pointing the way to the extension office.

Using the same green and white colors and the same metal, these smaller signs are 4½ by 15 inches in size. They come with a directional arrow, as shown below, or without the arrow for entrance doors, shown at the left.

For the extension office on the University of Kentucky campus, the directional signs make the Extension Service stand out from the other agencies. The USDA agencies on the campus are situated close to each other and are all listed on one large sign. At the top is the small directional sign pointing the way directly to the extension office.

Signs were made at a nominal cost by the Lagrange Reformatory, with arrangements made through the



Even with several USDA agencies in the building on the University of Kentucky campus, it's no trouble to find the Extension Service.

Prison Industry Section of the Kentucky Department of Welfare. They were designed by an artist in the University of Kentucky Printing Service and others in the Department of Welfare.



Labels as well as directional arrows guide visitors easily to county agents' offices.